

COMMISSION ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES
October. 26, 2017

Members Present	Members Absent
Noelle Heyman	David Denton
Syed Yusuf	Amoke Alakoye
Richard Jourdenais	Suzanne Ackerman
John Honig	Shenita Freeman
Jerry Morenoff	Mary Petrizzo
Rashid Makhdoom	Barbara Brubeck
Phyllis Rand	
Judith Peres	
Alan Kaplan	Liaisons
Revathi Vikram	Marcia Pruzan, Age Friendly Montgomery
Stephanie Edelstein	Leslie Marks, Depart. of Housing and Community Affairs
Ryan Wilson	Phil Smakula, Department of Recreation
Neal Brown	Stephanie Moore, Housing Opportunities Commission
Karen Maricheau	Denise Isreal, Department of Transportation
Nanine Meiklejohn	
Morton Faller	Alumni Members
Jack Sprague	Charles Kauffman
Monica Schaeffer	
Sue Guenther	
Hillery Tumba	Guest
Isabelle Schoenfeld	Tina Rouse
	Staff
	John Kenney, Department of Health and Human Services
	Odile Brunetto, Department of Health and Human Services
	Tremayne Jones, Department of Health & Human Services

Call to order—Chair, Noelle Heyman called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Welcome and Introductions—Noelle welcomed all attendees. Staff and guest introduced themselves.

Action—Sept minutes will be approved at Novembers meeting.

Treasurer's Report—Treasurer Revathi Vikram reported the COA account balance is \$ 6,130.82.

On October 18th Noelle met with County Council HHS Committee on behalf of the COA. The chair of each HHS board, committee or commission (BCC) had three minutes to present their entity's priorities for the FY19 County budget. A letter describing the COA's budget priorities has been previously submitted to the HHS Committee. All BCCs will include as a priority, to preserve the safety net of programs and services for vulnerable residents. The COA will advocate for the preservation and expansion of affordable senior rental housing options.

On October 18th Noelle met with Council President Roger Berliner, Councilmember George Leventhal, Councilmember Craig Rice and Councilmember Mark Elhrich to present COA's budget priorities and to give an overview of the COA high-level priorities that will be discussed in April of 2018.

Ad HOC Nominating Committee— Slate of Officers of 2018 were voted unanimously. They are: Isabelle Schoenfeld, Chair; Stephanie Edelstein, Vice Chair; Syed Yusuf, Budget Finance Advisor and Noelle Heyman, Secretary. The new slate of officers will take office on January 1, 2018.

Updates:

Dr. Jay Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services addressed the COA on the fire that happened at the Promenade Apartments in Bethesda on October 21st that displaced at least 1,100 residents of Montgomery County. Firefighters helped thousands of residents evacuate around 550 units after a transformer fire set off alarms in the high-rise apartment complex.

Jay spoke briefly about the Age Dementia Friendly Initiative presentation that was presented by Lylie Fisher, Caregiver Support Coordinator, Michael Buckley from Bright Focus and Janet Dopusizic from HC ManorCare to the Advisory Group at the Age-Friendly Montgomery County meeting that was held on October 25th. There was also a presentation by Sue Paul an Occupational Therapist who is the Director of a nonprofit organization called "Senior Scapes", this nonprofit organization looking to build recreation outdoor parks that are

accessible friendly targeting adults with dementia, cognitive impairments and Alzheimer. Caregivers can get relief and enjoy the outdoors with the seniors. Jay stated that hopefully in the future some funding can help promote this nonprofit organization which is working only with Frederick County for now.

The Age-Friendly Montgomery: A Community for a Lifetime 3-year strategic plan is now available and can be viewed at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/3-years-action-plan.pdf> This plan reflects the dedication to making Montgomery County a safe, livable place where people can age, remain and thrive with dignity and respect—A Community for a Lifetime.

Dr. Odile Brunetto, Director, Area Agency on Aging addressed the COA on one of the 10 workgroups of Age Friendly Montgomery County that has to do with Health and Wellness three priorities: Fall Prevention, Medication Management and Senior Center Plus. On October 28, 2017 Holiday Park Senior Center hosted National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Drug Take Back Day is a day when you can dispose of expired or unused medication in a secure, convenient and responsible manner. Unused or expired prescription medications are a public safety issue, leading to potential accidental poisoning, misuse, and overdose. Proper disposal of unused drugs saves lives and protects the environment.

On the topic of Medication Management, the grant received from the State Department of Aging in July to focus on medication management had to be spent by September. Health and Human Services (HHS) was able to pilot a project with EMS 911 responders to focus on frequent users who contact 911 for medication issues in the home. EMS trained staff are now able to check medication management and enter the medication into a software system and if the system alerts EMS staff they are able to contact the pharmacist the County is contracted with who will contact the physicians about the medications. EMS has worked with 50 seniors age 60 and over during this pilot, a report will be submitted to the State. Secretary Kramer with the Department of Aging is interested in the partnership with EMS and hoping to continue and replicate it in other parts of the State of Maryland.

In June 2016 the General Assembly created the Task Force on Long-Term Care Education and Planning. The goal of the Task Force is that every person under the age of 50 will be informed about what it takes to pay for Long Term Care. The Task Force is staff by United Seniors of Maryland (USM). Odile attended the first meeting of the Task Force, which is working with several committees, and is inviting interested people to join their committees. A report will be submitted by December 2017.

Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA) continues to work with the Veterans Administration (VA) Long Term Care program. This is a small program that will provide LTC services for five veterans in their home, it will include a wide range of services such as help with everyday tasks and support for managing an illness. This program is funded by the VA and the County will supervise a staff person who is a case manager. There is an individualized budget which will depend on the needs of the person the amount is \$1500-\$2500 a month. The agreement MDoA has with the VA is for 5 years.

Odile mentioned the two vacancies in her area: one is a full-time Nurse Manager position and the other is a part-time position for an Office Service Manager in the Senior Nutrition Program.

The Dementia Friendly America (DFA) Initiative continues to grow and is doing well, they have trained 15 people who will go into the community to speak at businesses and train staff on how to interact with people with dementia. The first group trained was a mobile dentist; they were so thrilled with the training that now they would like to be trainers. The program started this summer and to date DFA has trained over 50 employees. DFA will attend a Grass Roots Organization for the Well-being of Seniors (GROWS) meeting in January 2018.

Liaison Reports

Age Friendly Montgomery County-Marcia Pruzan spoke about the Age Friendly meeting on Wednesday Oct 25th "Connect our Community" will be taped with Lylie Fisher. AFC will be looking at budget priorities.

COA Alumni Committee-Charles Kauffman spoke about the events at COA alumni. Alumni group is engaging with Vital Living Network, GROWS and the Beacon to heighten awareness of senior issues. The purpose was brought to their attention by Austin Heyman because candidates in the public and county are not aware of senior issues in the community.

Department of Recreation-Phil Smakula stated that the Department of Recreation will submit their 3% budget reduction to the Office of Management Budget. Phil mentioned some of the events that will take place around the County at some of the Recreation and Senior Centers. On October 28th Holiday Park will host National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Phil also mentioned the popular Tech Connect Program an inter-generational program that connects older adults 55+ and teens through technology.

Department of Transportation— Denise Isreal mentioned that on September 18, 2017 MetroAccess customers now have a new more flexible option for travel within Maryland with the launch of the Abilities-Ride Program. The program offers an alternative to MetroAccess service by allowing eligible customers to use on-demand taxi services—without sharing a ride—at a discounted rate. The Abilities-Ride program offers subsidized rides in partnership with Regency Taxi and Silver Cab. Eligible MetroAccess customers can request transportation through these providers for any trip that begins and ends within the MetroAccess service area in Maryland. Riders can request their trip in advance by calling the taxi company directly, or through their respective websites or smartphone apps.

"The Abilities-Ride program is a win-win for Metro and MetroAccess customers in Maryland, who will soon have the ability to choose a taxi trip, rather than MetroAccess, at a discounted rate without having to make an advance reservation".

MetroAccess customers will pay as little as \$5.00 per trip to use Abilities-Ride. An estimated fare will be provided to the customer before taking a trip. Customers pay the first \$5 with Metro funding the next \$15 in fare. Any remaining fare over \$20 will be billed to the customer.

Two designated taxi providers offer wheelchair-accessible vehicles and accommodate customers traveling with a personal care assistant (PCA) and/or a service animal at no additional charge.

By avoiding more expensive MetroAccess trips, the Abilities-Ride program is estimated to save Metro \$4-\$6 million per year. Each trip taken on MetroAccess costs Metro about \$50 per trip.

Upon the launch of the program, customers will be able to take a maximum of four (4) taxi trips per day. Reservations are encouraged, but not required.

All drivers operating taxi service under the Abilities-Ride program will be required to undergo training on how to serve customers with disabilities, including those traveling with service animals, and accommodating customers who are deaf or hard of hearing or visually impaired customers who may need assistance getting in and out of the vehicle.

The program will be evaluated based on customer feedback, safety, service quality and fiscal impact to determine whether to expand Abilities-Ride to the District of Columbia or Virginia.

The Abilities-Ride program is an option for MetroAccess customers, and Metro will continue

to offer door-to-door shared ride service on MetroAccess for trips throughout the District, Maryland and Virginia. Additional information on Abilities-Ride will be provided to MetroAccess customers at a later time.

Seniors and Persons with Disabilities can now RIDE FREE on Ride On Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. in addition to Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. with valid identification.

Valid identifications include:

- Metro Senior SmarTrip card
- Medicare card along with a photo ID
- Metro Disability ID card
- Metro Disability with Attendant ID card

This program includes all Ride On buses and most Metrobuses in Montgomery County. For more information, visit www.RideOnBus.com or call 311.

Housing Opportunities Commission-Stephanie Moore mentioned that HOC revised their 5-year strategic plan. The latest plan 2013-2017 mission is to provide affordable housing and supportive housing services that enhance the lives of low-and moderate income families and individuals throughout Montgomery County, Maryland.

Commission Business-Noelle mentioned that the Legislative Breakfast will take place on November 16, 2017 at Holiday Park Senior Center located at 3950 Ferrara Drive, Wheaton Maryland from 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Jack Sprague will be the moderator for the event. The COA meeting will take place following the Legislative Breakfast at Holiday Park Senior Center

Upcoming Legislative Breakfast Nov. 16th and COA meeting- Stephanie mentioned the COA's Annual Legislative Breakfast will take place on November 16, 2017 at Holiday Park Senior Center in Silver Spring from 8:00 am to 10:00 am. Invitations have been sent to all members of the Montgomery County Delegation, and key County staff. This is an opportunity for the COA to share their priorities for state level action with the delegation, and to hear from them about their issues and priorities. Commissioner Jack Sprague has agreed to once again be our Master of Ceremonies. All members of the COA are urged to attend the breakfast and to interact with members of the delegation. The November COA meeting will take place immediately following breakfast event.

Planning for COA Holiday Luncheon –Karen will coordinate this event for the discussion of a location for the Holiday Luncheon in December.

New Business-Isabelle suggested drafting questions on candidates who are running for County Executive. Boards, Committees and Commissions cannot submit questions to candidates however, individual people can have a forum and ask questions on behalf of the community and not on the behalf of the Commission on Aging.

Respectfully Submitted.